



VETERANS HELPLINE CUSTOMER SURVEY

2007



HELPLINE CUSTOMER SURVEY 2007

Issued by:

Service Personnel and Veterans Agency

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1. Introduction

The Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA) is an executive Agency of the Ministry of Defence (MOD). SPVA formed on 1 April 07, bringing together the former Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency and Veterans Agency to provide services to both serving personnel and veterans. Combining the resources and expertise of these two Agencies paves the way for a more integrated and efficient service to both serving personnel and veterans, providing a through-life service.

The mission of SPVA is '**To deliver reliable, trusted and efficient personnel services to the serving and veteran communities**'. For the first time, personnel will be supported throughout their relationship with the MOD by a single organisation, SPVA.

The mission is underpinned by the following key principles:

- Customer Focus - understanding and responding to their needs
- Efficiency - cohesion, coherence and optimal use of resources
- Business Excellence - continually seeking improvement
- Employer of choice - well trained, valued and fully engaged staff

2. Objective

The objective of this survey is to assist SPVA in establishing the needs of current and future customers with particular emphasis on ensuring that the Agency identifies:

- The level of customer satisfaction with SPVA services
- The cause(s) of any dissatisfaction
- Customer choices
- Customer preferences
- Customer priorities
- Customer ideas for improvement.

3. Approach

By conducting regular surveys we are able to draw comparisons on services and identify trends. This report details results from this year's survey and provides comparisons with the results from the surveys conducted in 2004 and 2006 where available.

Questionnaires were issued to 1274 randomly selected callers who had contact with the Veterans Helpline between June and September 2007. Customers were targeted by call types:

- Veterans Badge application
- War Pension Appeals query
- War Pension Claims query
- AFCS
- Payments (e.g. change of bank)
- Miscellaneous (e.g. change of address)
- Form requests.

4. Management Summary

Access and Contact

- 87% of respondents calls to the Veterans Helpline were answered on their first attempt – 31% higher than in 2006.
- When telephoning more than once, 84% of respondents considered the number of attempts to speak to an operator was reasonable.
- 75% of respondents would prefer to listen to a message detailing their queue position and average waiting time, an increase of 4% from 2006.
- 97% felt they received sufficient information, help or advice from the operator, an increase of 2% from 2006.

Service Quality

- 98% of respondents were satisfied with the manner in which the operator dealt with them.
- 99% would recommend the Veterans Helpline service to others – 3% higher than in 2006.
- 98% rated the overall service as “very satisfactory” or “satisfactory”.

5. Recommendations

1. Enhance Helpline Operators’ knowledge of services provided by ex-service organisations.

Key Comments: “Require more knowledge about the forces in general and specifically the status of PAX insurance”.

“Operators were helpful, except each number they gave me was wrong”.

2. Look into the feasibility and cost of introducing a service to inform callers waiting of their queue position and/or average waiting time.

Key Result: Question 4 shows 75% of respondents would prefer to be in a queuing system and informed of their queue position and average waiting time.

The 2006 survey showed that customer preference was growing in this area. Helpline Managers stated that if the trend continued in the 2007 survey consideration would be given to this recommendation and the appropriate investigation work undertaken.

7. Next Steps

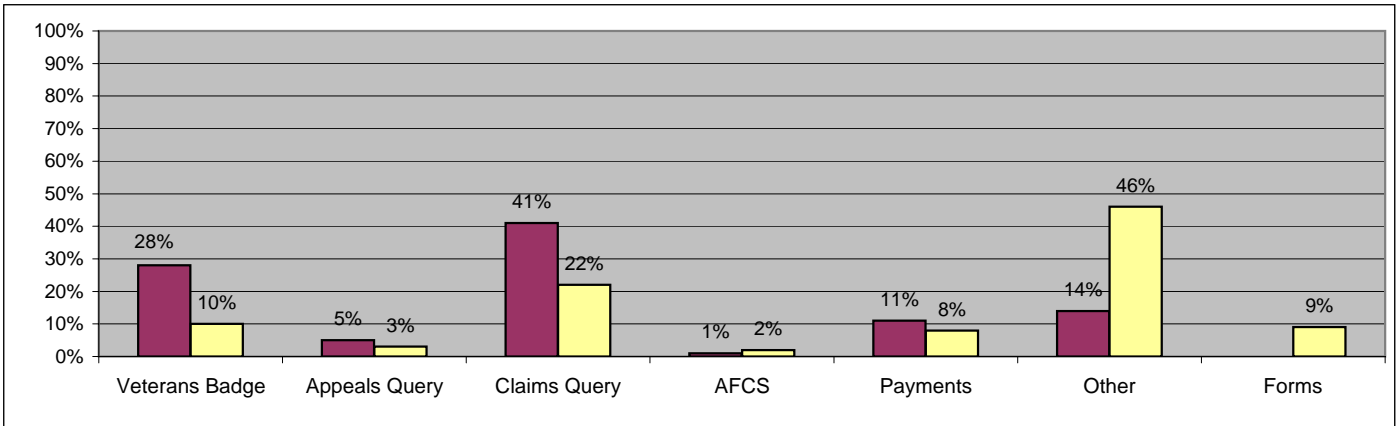
Hard copies of this report will be issued to key stakeholders. An electronic copy will also be placed on the Veterans UK website and SPVA infoCentre.

Recommendations for improvement will be considered and taken forward where appropriate.

CALL TYPE

	2004	2006	2007
Veterans Badge	NA	28%	10%
Appeals Query	NA	5%	3%
Claims Query	NA	41%	22%
AFCS	NA	1%	2%
Payments	NA	11%	8%
Other	NA	14%	46%
Forms	NA	NA	9%

Total Respondents	NA	533	735
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ACCESS AND CONTACT

1. What age group are you?

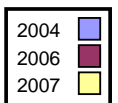
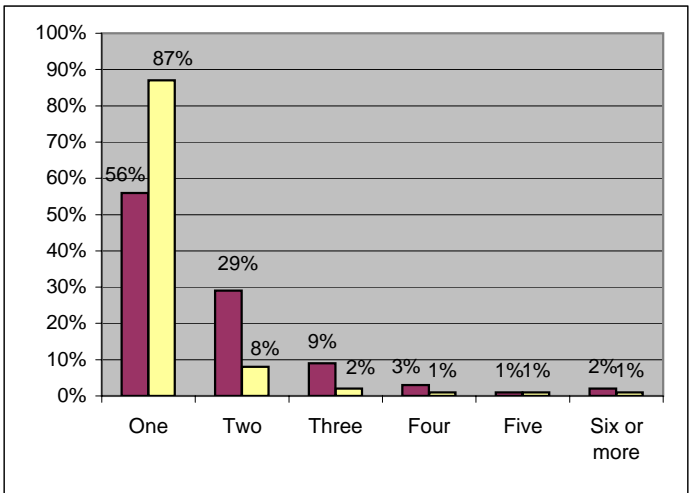
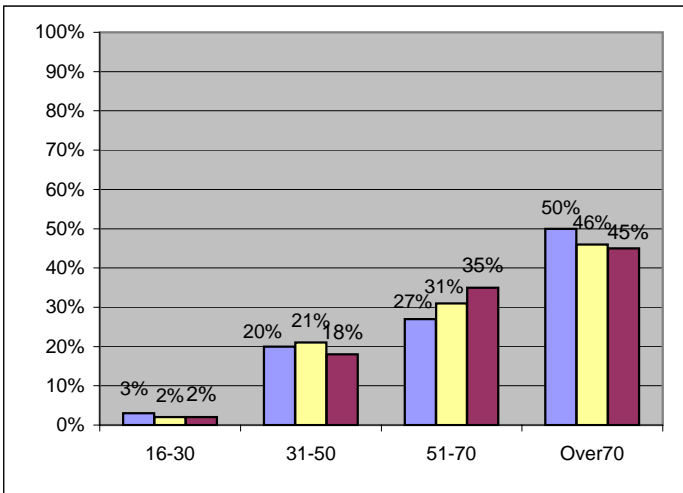
2. How many times did you have to telephone before your call was answered?

Total Respondents

2004	2006	2007
980	530	735

Total Respondents

2004	2006	2007
NA	522	731



ACCESS AND CONTACT

3. If you telephoned the Veterans Helpline more than once, do you consider the number of attempts you made to speak to an operator was reasonable?

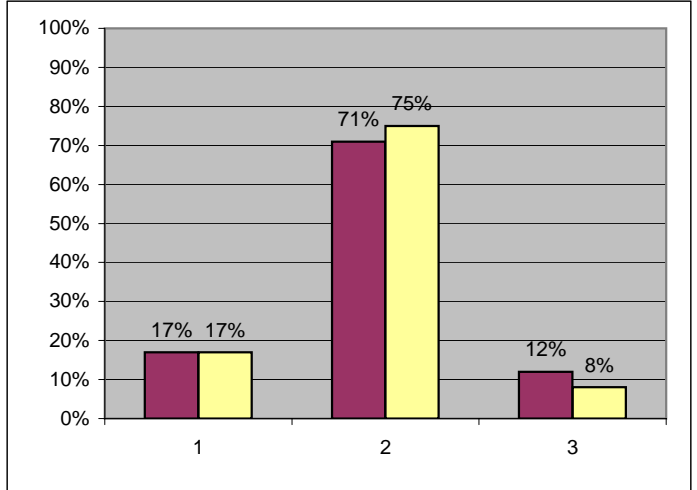
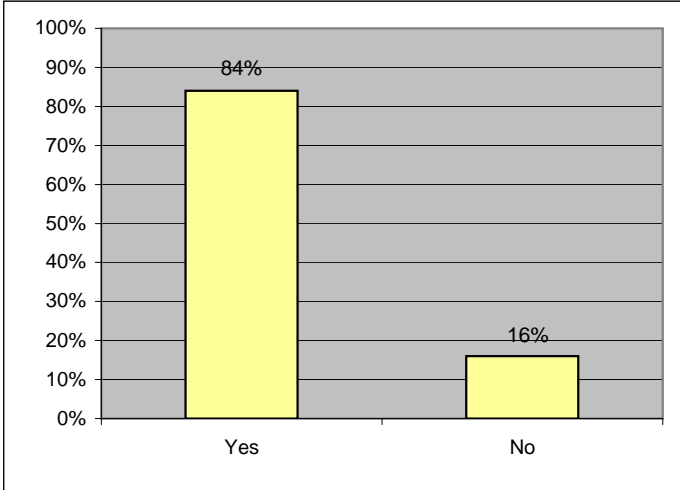
4. If your call cannot be answered due to lines being busy, what method of queuing system would you prefer?

Total Respondents

Total Respondents

2004	2006	2007
NA	NA	89

2004	2006	2007
NA	442	709



1. A message explaining the reason for delay
2. A message explaining queue position and average waiting time
3. Music until an operator is free

5. Do you feel you received sufficient information, help or advice from the operator?

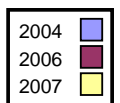
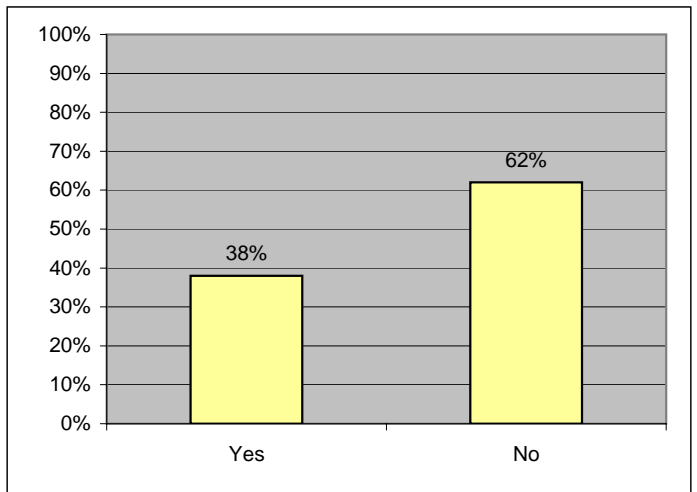
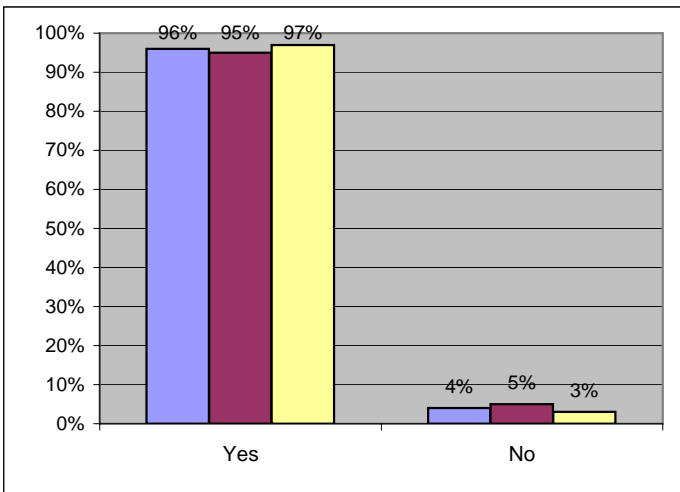
6. If you answered "no" to question 5 were you transferred to or provided with contact details for an organisation that could help you further?

Total Respondents

Total Respondents

2004	2006	2007
891	511	719

2004	2006	2007
NA	NA	21

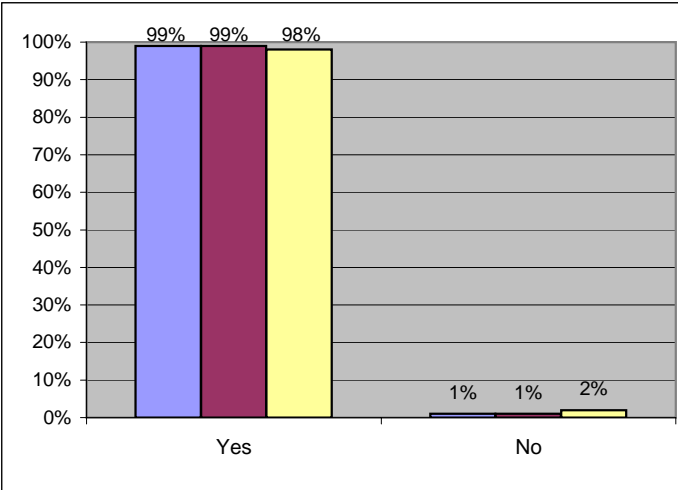


SERVICE QUALITY

7. Were you satisfied with the manner in which the operator dealt with you?

Total Respondents

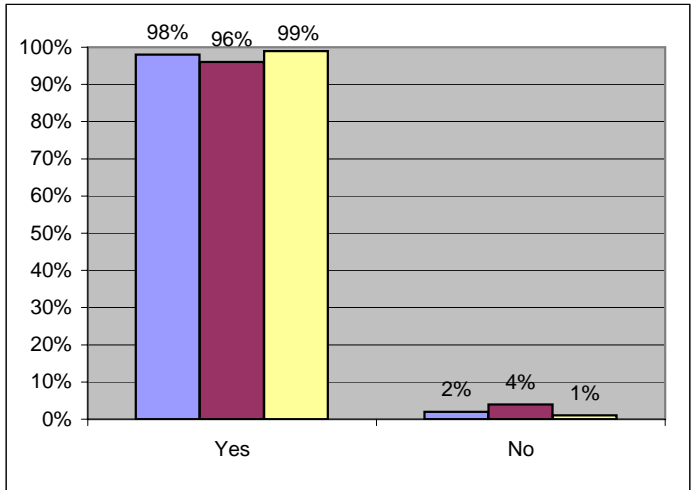
2004	2006	2007
924	506	716



8. Would you recommend the Veterans Helpline service to others?

Total Respondents

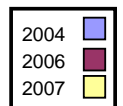
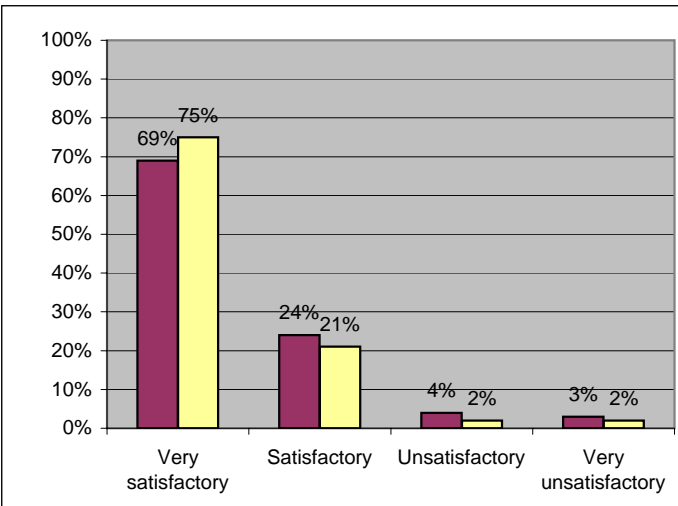
2004	2006	2007
949	530	715



9. Which of these words best describe the overall service you received from SPVA?

Total Respondents

2004	2006	2007
NA	529	717



9a. How would you rate the overall service you received from the Veterans Helpline by call type response rate?

	Veterans Badge	Appeals Query	Claims Query	AFCS	Payments	Other	Forms
Very Satisfactory	87%	29%	67%	67%	84%	76%	94%
Satisfactory	12%	57%	28%	33%	16%	21%	6%
Unsatisfactory	0%	5%	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Very Unsatisfactory	1%	9%	3%	0%	0%	1%	0%

Total Responses	71	21	163	12	57	330	63
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FURTHER COMMENTS

The following is a list of additional comments completed by individuals in the free text area provided on the questionnaire. Where numerous similar comments were received they have been collated and summarised. Any further one-off comments of relevance or suggesting potential improvements to the service have also been included.

6. If you were not provided with contact details for an organisation that could help you further, could we have assisted you further?

Each operator gave me different numbers.

Yes by transferring me to the right team or department

By being more knowledgeable about the forces in general and specifically the status of PAX insurance and not stating the SPVA is not part of the MOD when you are an MOD Agency.

7. Are there any ways you think we can improve the manner in which you were dealt with?

48 customers received excellent or good service.

21 customers commented on helpful staff.

Listened to my questions and gave me all the information I required.

Impressed by the courteous and professional manner of your operators.

No improvements needed first rate. Polite and put through to the right person first time.

Operators were helpful, except each number they gave me was wrong.

8. Would you recommend the Veterans Helpline to others?

8 customers have informed others of The Veterans Helpline

It is special to me to know that you are there with information and support.

My queries answered immediately.

9. How do you rate the overall service provided by the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency.

83 individuals stated they received excellent/good service.

42 individually commented on the helpful and professional staff

Everything was explained perfectly and honestly without judgement. Very happy with honesty it really lets you know where you are and I'm very grateful.

Help was given beyond what was expected.

I do like the telephone service you supply but when it is busy it just says it is busy at the moment and then cuts you of - this is annoying.

They always try to do their best. They are always polite even though I may not have been sometimes because I may have been upset.